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ACIES ORDINATA



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For circulation among Ours only

SOME VIEWS ABOUT SODALITIES FOR YOUNG WORKING-PEOPLE

BY FATHER HENRY HORSTMANN

For a better understanding of what follows, it may be observed that Father Horstmann has been laboring strenuously for several years past in the secretariate of the Central Council of Catholic German youth at Düsseldorf. This Central Council is the head of the Federation formed thirty years ago by all of the Catholic organizations for youth in Germany. Almost all the young men's Sodalities outside Bavaria entered the Federation, among them being five which were founded in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The Federation is made up of 4,394 organizations with 382,500 members of whom 205,000 are from 14 to 17 years of age, and 129,000 from 17 to 21.

The article shows the spirit in which these young men are directed. *Editor.*

My purpose is to set forth my ideas concerning our work in Sodalities for young working-men and their employers. Leaving aside therefore, Sodalities for men, women or students, I affirm that

1. The Sodality of Our Lady from its essence and its origin is the best, the " classic " method and model for the care of the souls of the young. Its spirit and its organization take account of the nature and characteristics of adolescent youth, which are especially : an ardent desire to advance in a religious sense, and to be associated with others in doing work for which they themselves will be responsible ; the necessity of clinging to a mature and tried leader ; readiness to fight in any branch of the apostolate ; a very clear notion of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

2. Based on these principles which are written into its constitution, the Sodality must necessarily take account of the different conditions of the times. In the 16th century, the cities were not overpopulated and business and industry was not carried on with the passion and energy of today. But the Sodality, if it is to be of real help to the adolescent and to the young man amid the great difficulties of the present time, must adapt itself to his condition, his state of life and his needs. It cannot pass over the character of the age, its customs, its social and professional questions. The old slogan : " *progress in studies and piety* " for the class of Sodalists of whom I speak, must read : *Progress in trade and occupation* as well as in religion. The Sodality as is pointed out by many, *in actual practice* takes little or no care of progress in one's trade and occupation ; it separates the religious life of the youth from the rest of his life ; and hence its authority with him is very slight indeed.

3. If the Sodality purposes to lead the youth to a good end, it must consider him whole and entire, that is, with all his intrinsic and extrinsic relations to religion and the family ; his life in leisure and in the course of his work, and his other needs, his conditions and questions. If the Sodality does not do this, it is to be feared that it will decline into an unimportant little society of the few.

The role of the Sodality is not simply to exist and flourish in some cities, but to withstand effectively the dangers of the times *everywhere ;* in other words, what the Sodality needs is a new

form, a re-adaptation and a wide-spread organization.

That organization is already perfected in northern Germany although possibly not all the unions within it are real Sodalities; certainly two parts of the 4,000 unions which joined the organization, are real Sodalities.

4. As for " *selection* ", it must be said that the boys and young men who belong to our Sodalities and to the other bodies which pertain to our great union, are in fact " select " in the cities and in the great centers of industry. After considering the means at hand for the salvation of souls, we absolutely cannot see in what other manner, young men can be rescued from modern dangers. Other workingmen's unions are especially organized from the social standpoint; but with us the *religious idea* holds the first place as a means of education. It is true to say, that without our organization Christian youth in industrial regions would have suffered many and much greater evils and losses (1).

5. There is one thing more I would add, though perhaps I may be misunderstood. The word " *Sodality* " in the course of time has become ambiguous. Perhaps it would be useful to write a brief account of what the Sodality is in essence, whether it is only for the select or for the great number; but what should be specially brought out is the living spirit of the Sodality just as it appears in our ancient statutes. We must be mindful moreover of the saying that the " *the letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth.* " (2 Cor. 3, 6). For my part, what I have always had before my eyes as the spirit of our Sodality has been the meditation on the Reign of Christ; in which I find the end and scope of the Sodality thoroughly expressed. Wherever in a young men's association this spirit works under the standard of Christ and the Blessed Virgin, the Sodality is doing the work whatever the name of the association may be and whatever its other circumstances and conditions may be. At the same time, I understand the great value of tradition and a venerable name.

As far as I can, I shall always strive to the best of my ability that our association shall always preserve and foster as much as possible w hatthe Sodality aims at namely that the boys may always love the Blessed Virgin Mary and her Divine Son, progress spiritually and cooperate for the upbuilding of the Church of God. I am fully aware that there is yet much to be done in that matter.

I hope that the discussion of this matter in " *Acies Ordinata* " will not end with these few words of mine. But let us always keep before our eyes the kind of Sodality we are talking about. Because in my judgment there is all the difference in the world between our ordinary Sodalities for " Gentlemen ", " Ladies ", " Young Ladies ", and " Students " on the one hand and those for young men and boys of the laboring-classes. The practical scope of these two groups of Sodalities is totally different, because while all these Sodalists practice devotion to the Blessed Virgin, her image is viewed from a different angle according to the class and the age of her clients.

(*Father Horstmann's paper gives ample matter for discussion.* The Editor would like to have the opinions of Directors.)

(1) Elsewhere, Father Horstmann, describes these losses: Take a parish of 10,000 souls. There will be from 800 to 1,000 young people. About 80 leave school. How will they come to manhood? Of these 80, probably 50 or 60 will enter the association for youth, providing the circumstances are good. Every year many will fall out. When the group are about 17 or 18 years of age, perhaps 15 or 20 will remain; later the number will be even smaller. The youth association of this parish will carry from 250 to 300 members on its records of whom 100, 120 or at most one-half will go to Holy Communion once a month. Often only 50 will appear. If we wish to be severe, how many adolescents respond to our idea of a thoroughly Catholic youth? Where are the 500 youths who did not join the Sodality or any other Catholic organization? Why is it that these young men were not awakened from their religious lethargy? (Korrespondenz-Blatt für Katholisch Jugendpräsides Düsseldorf) 1926, p. 160-161).

RULE 21

Reverend Father in Christ,

P. C.

The 21st Rule of the Sodality of Our Lady says that new officers should be put in every year.

Now we have elections regularly at the proper time, but the Major Officers and especially the Prefect and the First Assistant have all been re-elected every year for a long time past. The reason is that this has become the custom and moreover everyone fears the displeasure and envy of these officials once they are deposed. Of course, all this is a great detriment to the Sodality.

I earnestly beg your Reverence to give a speedy and authoritative explanation of the rule in the " *Acies Ordinata* ".

Answer: Really, I am sure your Reverence has no need of an explanation of the Rule, for you see clearly what is best in theory and what is less good in practice. Of course, it can happen that such re-elections may take place for years together in a Sodality without any detriment; indeed even with great profit.

But that the same Sodalists should remain in office for the motives pointed out by your Reverence, can hardly be profitable and is even detrimental. So the abuse ought to be done away with.

Perhaps the best way would be to approach these officers personally and try to induce them by good reasons to announce that, at least this year, they do not wish to be re-elected. When others have already taken office, it will be easy to make a local rule that the Prefect and the Assistants cannot hold office continually for more than three years.

If however they will not resign, your Reverence can almost certainly succeed in getting the consultors to omit the recalcitrants' names from the ternary which is to be submitted to the whole Sodality before the election. If nevertheless the consultors put those names in the ternary, you can reject them, giving your reasons. Of course this is a grave and distasteful matter, but it is necessary now and again, unless the Director himself on occasion, simply appoints the Prefect and the other Officers.

In the case of a Sodality of young people, the evil can certainly be remedied.

In deciding the whole matter, one must consider what is for the greater good of the Sodality, or at least what is the lesser evil; and then one must commend the matter very much to Our Blessed Lady.

WHY HAVE ACADEMIES IN THE SODALITY?

Among the foremost purposes of the academies, the principal one is that the members of the academy may form a unit as often as occasion may require, either in the University or in the Schools or in the Hospitals. Now this result is very efficaciously secured by the academy, since in it, Sodalists who formerly were practically strangers come to know each other well and become fast friends. The Sodality ought always to make itself felt outside the boundaries of the place where it is instituted, so that the Sodality may be said to be wherever two Sodalists are together.

Another fruit is the apostolate which they can exercise among their non-Sodalist companions. Many men are Sodalists today in the sight of the Blessed Virgin and of men, because they attended Sodality academy lectures in colleges and Universities on the invitation of Sodalists.

The third good result of these academies is the progress in knowledge made by the lecture and his hearers.

One of the special advantages of our Academy of Jurisprudence here is that it gives exercise in the difficult art of public speaking, and it may safely be said that the art is learned in the academies. Whoever learns to speak properly and effectively to ten or twelve persons, will speak well to an audience of two or three thousand. All he needs is to be persuaded that he has to deal with a just audience.

("*Juventus*" Dec. 1926, p. 436).

THE "SCHOLASTIC CENTER"

OF THE SODALITIES IN VALLADOLID, SPAIN.

"**A human laboratory**" (laboratorio de hombres) was what Cardinal Guisasola called the Scholastic Center of Valencia when he saw what it had done for the student Sodalists of that city.

Valladolid has followed the lead of Valencia, and since last October has its own "human laboratory". Since their commencement in 1864, the Valladolid Sodalities, with very modest quarters at their disposal, played a great part in the Christian education of many men now distinguished in industry, commerce, the learned professions and the army, in Spain and Spanish America.

The leaders of the Sodalities, however, were convinced that larger quarters and ampler facilities were imperatively demanded in order to shelter their student members from baneful attractions and enable them to progress more in their studies. In a clever pamphlet of 32 pages, well illustrated and handsomely printed, the Director, Father G. Santa Romana, S. J., and the other officers of the Scholastic Center Committee, have described the new Center and its aims, disclaiming all political tendencies (of which they had been accused) and showing parents and university officials the great and just claims which the Sodality Scholastic Center has upon them for financial and moral support.

The debt is about 200,000 pesetas.

The new Center houses: "*The Friends of Youth*„ (practically, if not technically, a Men's Sodality which exercises a fatherly supervision over the Center), the University students' Sodality and the College Sodality. Room is afforded for a Patronage for Working-youth and five schools for boys under the direction of the Christian Doctrine Brothers.

Each institution has its library, reading room, study circles, recreation hall and refectory. There is ample room and ventilation for 140 persons in the University students' study hall; their recreation room has 478 square yards of floor space. There is a large auditorium and a number of spacious halls for academies, etc.

The building has two floors with a street frontage of 37 meters and a depth of 50. It is well lighted and beautifully decorated in Spanish style.

The 800 students who actually compose the University Sodality have several sections; but it is the aim of the Scholastic Center to establish in addition, night schools for workingmen, classes in bookkeeping, drawing, apologetics, and special quiz classes. Several billiard tables are installed, but no provision for athletics has been made; perhaps the colleges and the University have sufficient facilities.

If you wish to be true sons and Sodalists of Mary Immaculate, I recommend three things to you: first choose a defect which you wish to correct, or a virtue you wish to acquire; then examine your conscience twice a day; and lastly, make it a rule to exercise some virtue three times a day.

P. Ereno in "*Paginas Marianas*„ 1926, Dec., p. 5.

THE BILBAO SODALITY BUILDING

1,400 youths, are enrolled in the Senior and Junior Sodalities, attached to the professed house in Bilbao, Spain. In each Sodality, there are 700 members. Between 200 and 300 are present and communicate daily at Mass. About 400 of the Senior Sodalists come for sports on Sunday. The Junior Sodalists are there during the week.

The Sodality Building specially erected and fitted for the purpose, was completed in 1925. On the second floor is a chapel, 27 by 10 meters, and a recreation hall of the same dimensions, which is used as a debating room or a theater, when required. The Life of Christ and His Blessed Mother is frescoed on the whole length of the walls, so that the Sodalists, even in recreation are subject to the elevating influence of holy scenes. There is a large office for the Director capable of accommodating special meetings, classes, etc., to the number of 50. A library-reading-room, well stocked with useful books, is next to the recreation hall. Underneath these extensive quarters, is a large space for handball, gymnastics, etc., all opening into a still larger court which can be used for sports in dry weather.

MARY, TEACHER OF MEN

Be a man! In what virtues should a Sodalist excel in order to be a perfect man? The Blessed Virgin will tell you.

He must have 1) faith in his heart,
2) prayer on his lips,
3) great courage in his life.

1. **Faith in his heart.** Faith is the adamantine foundation of the Catholic life which is rooted in God and as solid as His throne. What faith had the Blessed Virgin? "*Blessed are thou that hast believed!*" (St. Luke, I, 45).

2. **Prayer on his lips.** If a man has living faith, it easily breaks forth in words to God. Man is impelled to prayer in the first place by gratitude; what God the Father is to the whole world, such is a man to his family: the founder, the preserver, the ruler; what the Son is to His Spouse, the Church, such is a man to his wife: diligent, a faithful protector; what the Holy Ghost works in souls, is imitated by a man towards his dependents: he is their teacher, king and priest. Will a man then not be grateful to God?

Will he ask nothing of God, so that he may fulfil his duties well?

But as we know very little of the art of prayer, let us go to our Mother, who is a past mistress in the art and say with her "*Our Father who art in Heaven*".

3. **Strong courage in life.** Public utterance should be given to the faith in our hearts and the prayer on our lips. "*Let your light shine*" instead of being placed under a bushel. Show your colors promptly and everywhere. That men may do this willingly, the Blessed Virgin continually points out to them the part she had in founding the Church, which is so high and wonderful, which embraces all ages and peoples, so powerful, so exalted, so glorious.

("*Sedes Sapientiae*", Bruges, Belgium, 1926, p. 182, ss.)

INSTITUTIONS FOR FOSTERING VOCATIONS

Vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life are one of the great desiderata of the present time. The necessity of fostering them by every natural and supernatural means makes itself felt more and more in almost every part of the world.

In the German dioceses of Meissen and Freiburg, for instance, an organization was founded a short time ago, called "*The Women's Apostolate for vocations to the priesthood*". In addition to prayers and alms, associates give special attention to the education of boys in a truly Christian sense. They contribute a mark a year, and try to enroll two other women in the apostolate. The archdiocese of Prague has such an organization.

Then there is the *Clergy-Recruiting movement*, carried on until his recent death by Father Joseph Delbrel, S. J. It was only after sixteen years of patient endeavor that Father Delbrel saw the first Congress for this purpose opened in Paris in 1923. Since then similar congresses have been held in many parts of the world. Father Delbrel's review, "*Le Recrutement Sacerdotal*", continues to issue from the press of the "Messenger of the Sacred Heart" at Toulouse.

In Austria for some years past the *Association of St. Peter Canisius* is working for the same end under the leadership of a Sodalist schoolmaster.

"*The Society of Our Lady's Young Priests*" at Campion House, Osterley, England, was founded in 1919 by Father Edmund Lester, S. J., with the express purpose of helping men who felt called to the priesthood later in life than the average clerical student. Over 300 men have spent two years at Osterley preparing themselves to enter some seminary or novitiate. At present, about 60 students enter Osterley every year; in 1926, 30 left on completing the course, to continue their studies elsewhere. Almost all the dioceses and religious orders in England have recruits from Osterley; some are working on the foreign missions. Father Lester must himself collect all the money necessary for his project. He certainly was very happy in his choice of a name for his Society.

"*Apostolic Schools*" are another form of this activity.

The United States too has its Osterley, founded by Father Jeremiah P. O' Mahoney at Oriskany, in the diocese of Syracuse, N. Y.

It is an honor for every Sodalist, to help such organizations. The Sodality too *as a body* may well

lend a hand, in their establishment in favor of a town or a diocese. Some Sodalities have the laudable custom of praying in their meeting for good priests; elsewhere each member of the Eucharistic section has a day assigned him to pray and communicate for that intention; still other Sodalities contribute to the expenses of a definite seminarian who is studying for the missions or the home field (1).

In Holland, many Sodalities, like the **Gentlemen's Sodality of Tilburg,** have added a new Section; they start a burse of 4,000 florins for the support of a student until he reaches the priesthood. The burse is put under name of some Saint so as to have his or her help to complete it. Pamphlets are then circulated among Catholics, setting out the beauty, utility and necessity of the work; the rich are encouraged to give large sums, while the well-to-do and the poor are reminded that every little bit helps. (Cf " *Directeuren-Tijdschrift* ", 1926, p. 167).

The Holy Father recently praised this sort of apostolic zeal among the men of Rome, saying that no other work can be compared with that by which the missions and the vocations to the priesthood are fostered; Catholic men by collaborating in this work, do wonderful good to the people.

A clever and valuable method of promoting vocations is followed by the Eucharistic Section of the Ladies' Sodality of St. Joseph's Church, at Nijmegen. On June 28th, last, they brought boys to the church to pray for half an hour for this intention before the Blessed Sacrament exposed; the next half hour was for the girls of a certain class in a convent; and so they continued alternating groups of boys and girls during the school hours of that day. This very laudable and attractive custom which can easily be followed by all Sodalities, in some form, originated in s'Gravenhage.

Certainly this is a work which can never be sufficiently recommended to Sodalities; it is worthy of all the ingenuity and generosity of all Sodalities. This is something to speak about especially to Sodalities of young women. What should be insisted on in talking to parents is *the Eucharistic education* of their children; let the parents heed the desire of the Church and ask their priests to admit their children to the Holy Table as soon as the laws of the Church allow. If there be any means of preparing the hearts of the children from their youth for this vocation, it certainly is this union with Christ in their tender years.

There is beautiful and easy matter for Sodality talks!

(1) "*A Vital Need of the Church, the support of our Seminaries*„ Trichinopoly, 1926, Indian Catholic Truth Society, 13 pp; "*The Queen's Work*" 1927, p. 13.

WHO WILL ANSWER

the following wish of one of our correspondents?

" It would be well if all the Sodalities of the whole world should have imposed upon them some great work of mercy or some other work of that sort which would enkindle zeal. "

CHRONICLE

Sixty College Sodalists Teach Catechism in three centers at **Toledo**, Ohio, U. S. A. This is the welcome news which has just reached us through " *The Province News Letter* „ (Missouri). February, 1927. Another encouraging feature is that *half of these catechists are young men*, members of the College Sodality, directed by Rev. William A. Ryan, S. J., in **St. John's College.** The other half are young women who attend Mary Manse College and Notre Dame Academy. One center is in the *Slovak* Church at Rossford, where there is no resident pastor; 75 children attended the first class, and it is expected that the enrollment will reach 125. Two other centers, one in a *Mexican*, the other in a *Polish* settlement will soon be established. The Director is very much pleased with the enthusiasm manifested by the young men.

Dominican Archbishop calls for doctrinal hymns and music for the conversion of the negro. Some Jesuits of the Missouri Province recently asked Most Rev. John T. McNicholas, O. P., Archbishop of Cincinnati, Ohio, U. S. A., about the advisability of a catechism in verse. His Grace replied with a suggestion that hymns be written for the negroes which would contain much of the Church's doctrine, at least the essentials of their religious preparation for admission to the Church.

Perhaps such a poet might be found among the Sodalists of the South, who know the negro well. The children helped St. Francis Xavier's Indian apostolate by singing his hymns. Arius and Luther made sad but effective use of this form of propaganda. *There's an apostolate of the pen! (The Province News Letter (Missouri), February, 1927).*

Poor Families adopted by College Sodalities. This practical form of charity is being exercised by the College Sodality and the Junior Sodality in **Rockhurst College, Kansas City,** Missouri, U. S. A. The College Sodality "adopted" two; the Juniors adopted several, about forty dollars in money being collected, along with a large quantity of food-stuffs and old clothing. (*The Province News-Letter, (Missouri) February, 1927*).

Three-Year Cycle of Papers on the Sodality being completed by **Philosophers' Academy, Mt. St. Michael's, Hillyard, Wash.,** U. S. A. The Sodality Academy in this House of Studies has lately forwarded several of the discourses of its members to the Central Secretariate. They were accompanied by the extensive outlines issued by the student president of the

Sodality Academy, Mr. Wm. A. Huesman, S. J., (Calif.). One of the most encouraging features of this academy is the fact that it has persevered in following out the original plan drawn up three years ago by Mr. Lawrence Foran, S. J. (Md.-N. Y.), who had already taken a prominent part in Sodality Academy work at Weston, Mass. A membership drive during the last minor vacations brought in 75 names out of a total of 87 philosophers, and the average attendance has been about 60. Taken in connection with the popularity of the academy in its two first years, it would seem reasonable to believe that at least one-half of this year's graduating class will have heard discussions on the chief features of the Sodality's constitution, and on its achievements and possibilities in the apostolate. Moreover, as orderly, typewritten synopses of the papers read, were given to each member, all have the necessary preparation for a considerable number of important talks to Sodalists.

Father Lord's plan of Sodality organization was the subject of very lively debate, and gave occasion especially to the newer academicians for the expression of different views on the Sodality and its aims, such, for example, as "the Sodality should go in for the social life; have its weekly dance, card parties, etc., be the Catholic Y. M. C. A; The principle of Selection is unpractical for American boys, etc." A thorough index to the articles in "*Acies Ordinata*" has been almost completed by the Academy, and it is hoped that it will be published in Rome.

Sodality promotes mission propaganda. November 2, 1926, owing to the initiative of the Sodality of Our Lady for the teachers of **Valladolid** a conference on methods of helping the foreign missions was given to the professors and students in the normal school, located in the convent of Maria Reparadora. The lecturer was Miss Nieves Gallastegui, at present a student in the Normal School of Berriz (Vizcaya) which is said by competent critics to lead all Spanish colleges in helping the foreign missions.

Madrid Sodalist founds Sodality in his hometown. "On my return from Madrid," writes A. C. Oliva of Molina de Segura (Murcia), "where I had been filled with the spirit of the Sodality and had seen the great good which the Sodalities of Our Lady accomplish in the community, I decided to found one in my native town, which in following the example of the rest of its class would render the same fruits as they. For this purpose, I needed aid and I soon found it in some enthusiastic friends who were already enrolled in the Catholic Youth associations. On the day of Sts. Peter and Paul, June 29, 1924, we went to the young and zealous curate, Don Juan Saez Hurtado, who received us with open arms, having himself thought a long time about such a foundation. Two weeks later the Sodality was a reality. It still flourishes."

(*Estrella del Mar*, 1926, p. 501).

OUR EXCHANGES

The following is a list of the Society publications received at the Central Secretariate of the Sodalities of Our Lady from December 1, 1926, to January 25, 1927.

Am Scheideweg; Jugendführung; Jugendverein; Jung-Wacht; Korrespondenzblatt für Kath. Jugendpräsides; Die Wacht; all published in **Düsseldorf**, Germany. Virgo Mater (**Munich**). Sodalenstimmen (**Münster**, Westphalia, Germany).

Omhoog (**Vught**, Holland). Directeuren-Tijdschrift (ibid.) Sedes Sapientiae (**Bruges**, Belgium). Janua Coeli (**Liège**, Belgium).

La Forza (**Bari**, Italy). Stella Matutina (**Rome**). Tra Noi (**Turin**). Eco di Vita Collegiale (**Brescia**, Italy). Ricordati di Tua Madre (**Naples**).

Maria Kongregàcio (**Cluj**, Roumania).

Marianska Kongregàcio (**Trnava**, Czechoslovakia). Hlazy Hlasy (**Sv. Hostyne**, Czechoslovakia).

Vjesnik Marijinich Kongregactja (**Zagreb**, Jugoslavia). Glasnik, (**Ljubljana**, Jugoslavia).

Les Cahiers Notre Dame (**Rheims**, France).

The Queen's Work (**St. Louis**, Mo., U. S. A.). The Madonna (**Melbourne**, Australia). The Madonna (**Dublin**, Ireland).

Mensageiro de Maria (**Valença** do Minho, Portugal). Echos da Missão de Shiu-Hing, (**West River**, China).

Boletin de la Anunciata (**Habana**, Cuba). Juventus (**Barcelona**, Spain). Paginas Marianas (**Vitoria**, Spain). Nuestra Hoja (**Buenos Aires**, Argentina). Instaurare (ibid.). Efemerides Marianas, (**Santiago** de Chile).

We desire very much to receive at least all **Sodality magazines** and other **Marian publications**. We would also be very grateful for copies of the "**Province News Letters**", and similar monthly and annual publications of the various provinces. It often happens that interesting and instructive accounts concerning activities which fall within the scope of the Sodality are to be found in those publications, and through the medium of the Latin and English editions of the "*Acies Ordinata*", the knowledge of them may easily be extended to the whole Society.

A good digest of the **minutes** of important Sodality congresses, Directors' Congress, etc., are also very much desired here, for publicity purposes.

Those who forward us literature and information of this sort are rendering a very valuable service to the **propaganda** in favor of the Sodalities.

On the other hand, the editors of "*Acies Ordinata*" are always very much pleased when they find that they have been able to afford some "*copy*" to editors of Sodality magazines. Credit has sometimes been given to "*Acies Ordinata*" on such occasions, but as the "*Acies*" cannot be freely given to non-Jesuits, it is far preferable not to cite it.

Familiar intercourse between Directors and Sodalists. It is certainly not enough for the Director to deal with the Sodalists as a body, solemnly and officially and only in the chapel; he must also treat with them personally. Many Directors take occasion of the-

patron-saints' days to offer the Sodalists their congratulations.

Some Directors distribute cards in which these days are noted opposite the Sodalists' names. Thus it oftens often happens that the Director meets several members when he makes his visits of congratulation. Such visits serve greatly to gain the Sodalists' good will.

IN A NUTSHELL

P. H. U. The best means of giving Sodalists a solid introduction to the liturgy would be to establish a *Liturgical Section or Academy.* There are many manuals on the subject. *A. O.*, 1926, p. 19.

P. B. D. One or two sections or academies are useful and even necessary for every Sodality; but excess must be avoided. If you are *thinking of founding a section* for some purpose, and there is another society already carrying on that work, ordinarily the better course is not to found the section, but do all you can to encourage some of your Sodalists to enter that society and distinguish themselves there by zeal, sacrifice and example. When however the field is not yet occupied, but you find that your Sodalists are sluggish and indifferent, do all in your power to excite the desire in them for such a section.

P. F. S. Yes, *Matthew Talbot*, the holy workingman who died in Dublin in 1925, *was a Sodalist.* His tombstone reads: " To the memory of Matthew Talbot, who died on the 7th of June, 1925, aged 60 years. This monument was erected by the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception of St. Francis Xavier's Church, of which he was a fervent member for 40 years."

P. Z. V. The *first aggregations to the Prima Primaria* of Sodalities for children under fourteen years of age are: Nice, 1642; Lucerne, 1648; Innsbruck, 1649. See Mullan, History of the Prima Primaria Sodality, Herder, St. Louis, Mo., p. 151.

NEW BOOKS

Ein Muttergöttesbuch *by Father A. Vermeersch, S. J.*, 3 vols., Innsbruck, Marianischer Verlag, 1924-26.

This is a translation of the excellent work, written originally in French and deservedly translated into many languages. It leads to an intimate knowledge of the Blessed Mother of God, and hence to a deep and solid love of her and to the imitation of her virtues. Vol. 1 treats of her life on earth; vol. 2 of her feasts, and vol. 3 of her graces, virtues and glories.

While the treatment of the matter is very pleasing, it is also theologically very accurate, and affords Directors ample matter for suitable talks to their Sodalists.

The same house publishes:

Hochziele echter Marienverehrung. Ein Sodalenbüchlein von *G. Wiederkehr, S. J.*, which treats of:

Devotion to our Lady in general and in the Sodality; modern difficulties against this devotion; life in union with Mary.

Face a la Vie. By *Father Raoul Plus, S. J.*, Toulouse, 1926, Apostolat de la Prière.

Points for brief meditations covering the effects of baptism, fortitude, necessary virtues, the apostolate, etc. They are specially prepared for adolescents such as our young Sodalists, and the themes are taken from different sources, even from the gibes thrust at Catholics by their enemies with some foundation in fact. All are well calculated if prayerfully meditated upon, to lead to an intelligent esteem of the Christian life and to the practice of the apostolate.

Wie Ich Jesuit wurde. By *Father Henry Abel, S. J.* Verlag der Fahne Mariens, Vienna, 1926.

The press of the world had hardly ceased to speak of the life and death of this great apostle of men in Vienna, when his own account of his extraordinary vocation to the Society was issued.

It will be particularly interesting to Directors and members of Students' Sodalities.

The Central Secretariate would like to receive a copy of every new book issued concerning Our Lady and her Sodality.

AN ANSWER TO THE SODALITY THESES

(" *Acies Ordinata* ", *October, 1926*)

The first thesis is true, and can be easily fulfilled by Sodalists of both sexes.

For *the second* laymen are necessary, and the principal means for enkindling their zeal are the Spiritual Exercises **well** made. The same response may be to *the third* thesis.

The fourth, is true.

For *the fifth*, I should say that besides love and devotion toward the Blessed Virgin, there is need of a knowledge of her **mission** regarding the salvation of men.

The conclusion is excellent. Would that rectors and all superiors (1), and even all of Ours had a particular affection for some Sodality! It would lead them to favor Sodality Directors and to aid them also. Then the Sodality would not be regarded as everybody's (and hence nobody's) business.

Nor would I have superiors take this interest in the Sodalities solely out of a charitable desire of helping the Directors, but also through motives of zeal and helpfulness and because of the efficacy inherent in the Sodality as an extension of the Society, an efficacy which is almost " ex opere operato " for the salvation of men.

(1) Without reprehending or complaining about any of them.

UTILITY AND OPPORTUNENESS
OF THE SODALITY RECOGNIZED.

To what has already been said in our November-December (1926) number, concerning the recent Congress of Sodality Directors, held at Chicago in August, 1926, the following is of very special importance.

The note of pessimism with which the Congress began gradually changed to one of optimism. In the opinion of the writer in " The Province News-Letter ", (Missouri) the following four considerations were responsible for the change.

" First, it was pointed out that Father General considers the Sodality and the League of the Sacred Heart as our biggest and most important activities.

"Next, it was proven from enrolment statistics that despite all the hue and cry of failure to inspire and enlist members, the Sodality is unquestionably the **largest Catholic society** in the country, outstripping with its million and a half members the *Holy Name Society*, *Knights of Columbus*, *Third Order*, etc.

" Then the splendid and effective work of **energetic Directors** from every part of the country and the details and description of their **success** began to create an optimistic spirit.

" Finally when the older priests struck the note of being **loyal to it as a traditional work** of the Society with three centuries of splendid achievement behind it, when they instanced that perhaps **the majority of vocations** to the Society were developed or at least substantially **encouraged by it** and boldly asserted that criticism really amounts to disloyalty to the Society and that having put our hands to the plow we might not choose to look back, a very new and happy attitude toward the general Sodality movement was crystallized and formed. "

When any instrument of the Society has been used with such good results for so many centuries, there is every reason to believe that its effectiveness is just as great **today**. Nevertheless if it should clearly appear that the Sodality were antiquated and out of date, the Society would not hesitate a moment to relegate it to a museum with the sword of St. Ignatius and all other venerable relics. But this is not the case, and *the earnest propaganda which the Society is making for the Sodality is based upon the gratifying results which it is producing* **today**, and which prove beyond cavil, that when properly understood and directed, it is one of the most powerful organizations for the strengthening and spreading of the Kingdom of Christ.

SODALIST MARTYR IN MEXICO

Last October in Zamora, State of Michoacan, Mexico, a band of soldiers arrested two young men, Emanuel R. Melgarejo, aged 17, and Joaquin Silva Cordoba, aged 25. The pretext was that they were making religious propaganda. (A later account declared that the cause of their arrest was the uncompromising Catholicism which they manifested in conversation with a Mexican army officer whom they met in a train).

The soldiers ordered young Melgarejo to shout " Long Live Calles ", but he kept shouting " *Long Live Christ the King* " (Viva Cristo Rey) and declared himself ready to die with pleasure for his religion. The soldiers then began to cut off his ears bit by bit, trying to extort compliance with their demands, but seeing that he continued to cry " Viva Cristo Rey " they cut out his tongue.

Envying the fate of his young companion, Silva Cordoba embraced the boy so tightly that the soldiers could not drag him away so they shot and killed them both. *(La Revista Catolica, El Paso, Tex.)*

Father James Ramirez, S. J., who accompanied the 15 Mexican Sodalists who came to Rome for the Aloysian celebrations last December, informed us that he received Melgarejo into the Sodality seven years ago.

Immediately after their tragic death, the bodies of these young men were exposed for a whole day. Flowers placed in their hands, are said to have been found after forty-eight hours as fresh as at first. The earth, saturated with their blood, was collected by the devout, according to the custom so common in the great European persecutions under the Empire. Their clothes were cut into bits and distributed, and their bodies were buried in white coffins.

Favors have been attributed to Joaquin Silva Cordoba.

In many Mexican workshops, workers have been dismissed because they belonged to the Catholic union and refused to deny the Faith. Student Sodalists collected and distributed money to provide for the needs of these confessors of the Faith, The Sodalists also arranged lodgings in their own houses and in those of friends for these unfortunates, and besides this material help, they instructed them in religion by word and example, thus enabling them to endure better the bitterness of the persecution. (*Servicio de Prensa, Madrid, 1926, n. 12, p. 22*).

Where Sodalists are persecuted.

Sodalists, like other people, are doubtless tempted from time to time to underrate the value of the Sodality and its practices. They might well reflect on these words which come from persecuted Mexico:

" Now that God and His sacraments fail us in our churches and that to have Him we must run the risk of going to jail, how we appreciate finding Him (in Communion at Mass in private houses), and how we regret having passed our lives without receiving Him and loving Him when he was always among us! ".

Teaching of Christian Doctrine continues despite persecution.

Sodalist catechists will be encouraged in their task by the following words of a heroic Mexican woman (probably a Sodalist) who with her sisters faces prison, dishonor and martyrdom, rather than desist from works of apostolic zeal.

" Would you like to see me in jail," she writes. " The truth is I am afraid of it, but in spite of that, your sister and I and another girl friend of ours **continue to carry on our Catechism Center.** And they give us such frights! We have spies on our trail almost every day. We lost our whole afternoon a few days ago trying to elude two of them who were following us after we left the street-car. We must change houses constantly in order to avoid detection. We have 60 boys and 30 who are preparing for First Communion. But how do you think they will ever make it?

" Our chief anxiety is to gain this point and I believe that God will help us to gain it in spite of so many difficulties and dangers.

" He will take possession of those hearts ".

Editor : *Lawrence E. O'Keeffe, S. J.*
Superiorum permissu.

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